



# EU MINOR USES COORDINATION FACILITY

## Newsletter

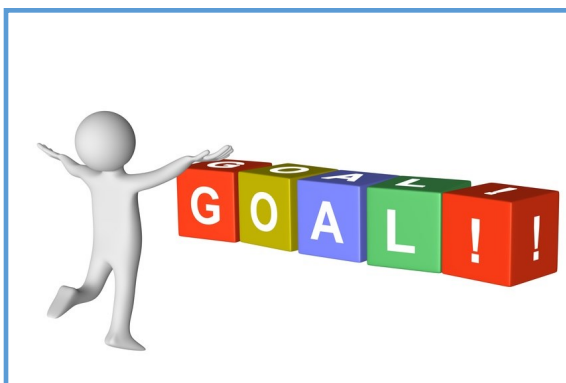
No. 6, April-May-June 2018

### Minor uses, major issue!



In 2018, Wageningen University & Research (WUR) celebrates 100 years of existence. This Dutch university is world famous. One of the fields WUR is working in is the use of insects for biological control of greenhouse pests. In 1953 fundamental research started in Wageningen to investigate insect-plant relations and laid down foundations for environmental friendly pest control. Now it has become common practice to release beneficial insects to control the population of an insect pest.

The goal of the Coordination Facility is to solve minor use problems and as such contribute to sustainable food production providing healthy products to consumers. Can we celebrate in 2020 our 5 years of existence? Funding is essential to reach our goal. On 15 April 2018 the Grant Agreement with the European Commission regarding the funding of the EU Minor Uses Coordination expired. The MUCF is now fully depending on voluntary assessed contributions from Member States. Funds for 2018 are secured, but what is the situation for 2019 and beyond?



In early 2018 the MUCF conducted a survey to Member States, on their priorities and needs on minor uses. Thanks to their cooperation and efforts, we now have a picture of the main minor uses issues in Europe. This information is now online in EUMUDA. Which crops and pests are the main European priorities? Read more in the newsletter.

The work of the MUCF has the attention of the European Parliament. Firstly, in early 2018 the MUCF was approached by the Parliamentary Research Services of the Secretariat of the European Parliament in the preparation for their implementation report on Regulation (EC) 1107/2009. This has been followed by a request for a visit of a delegation of the PEST Committee of the European Parliament to our premises, planned in July.

A short interview with Vivian Powell, member of the CEG Fruits and Vegetables, is provided.

Many international contacts were at OECD-meetings in mid-June where the MUCF discussed issues on minor uses and biopesticides with colleagues from all over the globe: from Australia to Canada, and from Japan to the United States. Whether you travel the globe, or stay at home, I wish you all well-deserved and relaxing summer holiday!

Jeroen Meeussen, Coordinator of the MUCF

### Outline

Funding and governance of the MUCF, p. 2

Minor uses priorities in Europe, p. 2-3

EPPO Working Party, p. 3

REFIT update, p. 3-4

OECD meetings, p. 4

Horizon 2020, p. 5

Interview Vivian Powell, p. 5-6

CEG-HEG autumn meetings, p.6

## Long-term funding and changes in the governance of the MUCF

As already mentioned in the editorial the grant agreement with the European Commission (DG SANTE) and the governments of Germany, France and the Netherlands regarding the funding of the EU Minor Uses Coordination has expired. This has led to changes in the governance and the financial operations of the MUCF.

Currently, positive responses have been received from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland. Is your country not yet on the list? Ask your government to reconsider their support as all countries are concerned by minor uses!

The MUCF has approached DG AGRI with a request for funding. Both DG AGRI and the MUCF promote IPM-solutions for plant protection issues. The Minor Uses Steering Group agreed that contributions by industry, and third parties, should not be used to cover the costs of the Coordination Facility itself. This is to avoid any conflict of interest in the running of the Coordination Facility.

The new financial situation obliges the Coordination Facility to make changes to the reimbursement of expenses of experts attending meetings organized by the EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility. It is the intention to align as much as possible with current reimbursement practices within the European Commission and EPPO.

### Main changes at a glance:

- For meetings in 2018 the MUCF will only reimburse travel and accommodation costs
- Reimbursement will be limited to one expert per Member State for the Commodity Expert Groups and the Horizontal Expert Group
- For CEG Fruits & Vegetables a maximum of two experts per Member State will be reimbursed
- In addition, the Chairs of the different expert groups will have their travel and accommodation costs reimbursed
- Member States may send more experts to the meetings, but on their own expenses
- For meetings in 2019 only travel costs will be reimbursed.

Considering the expiry of the Grant Contract, and the fact that new funders should also take part in the governance of the Coordination Facility, a new interim Minor Uses Steering Group has been appointed. The new interim Steering Group will consist of Germany and the Netherlands (as representatives of the original funders), as well as Sweden, Italy and Switzerland. The Netherlands was elected as the new interim-Chair of the Steering Group. We wish the new interim Steering Group good luck!

## Minor uses priorities in Europe

In early 2018, the MUCF asked EU Member States, plus Norway and Switzerland to amend or provide their needs and priorities on minor uses. A similar exercise had taken place in 2017 in preparation for the Third Global Minor Use Summit (Montreal, October 2017) (for more information see the 4<sup>th</sup> Newsletter). The survey was re-conducted in order to obtain responses from more Member States, harmonize the priority setting and list crops and pests preferably at species level.

The MUCF would like to thank countries for all their efforts in completing this work, for identifying the needs at species level, setting the priorities, making very useful remarks or responding to detailed additional questions from the MUCF.

The MUCF is pleased to inform you that the results are now available in EUMUDA ([www.eumuda.eu](http://www.eumuda.eu))! They can be found in the tab ‘Table of needs’.

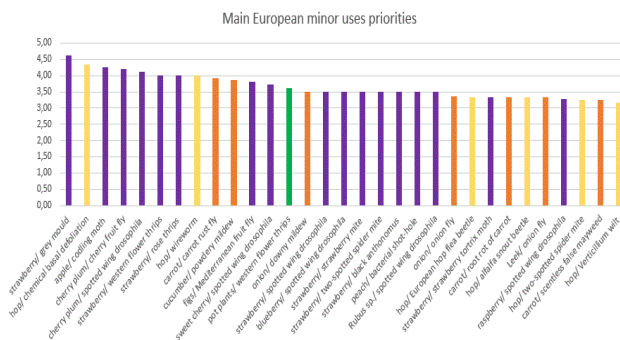
Data is now available from a total of 26 Member States including Norway and Switzerland. Minor uses needs from Member States who have not (yet) replied according to the survey are sourced from the ERANET C-IPM.

More details on how priorities were set and how tables were compiled are presented in EUMUDA.

When countries have indicated the same needs, these needs are displayed in one line in the table ‘Minor uses table of needs grouped by needs’. You can access this table in EUMUDA by first going to the main page of the table of needs, and then clicking on the indicated link.

The main European priorities identified were in fruits followed by vegetables and some needs on hops and ornamentals. In these crops the most damaging organisms are insects. The spotted wing drosophila (*Drosophila suzukii*) is listed several times as a pest organism on soft fruits.

The main European priorities are illustrated in the graph below.



### *Main priorities on minor uses in Europe*

It is expected that early July 2018 graphs on the main European priorities and on the main priorities per individual Commodity Expert Group (Fruits and Vegetables, Ornamentals, Hops, Seeds, Mushrooms, Tobacco and Rice) will be displayed in EUMUDA.

## EPPO Working Party on Plant Protection Products

This year the EPPO Working Party on plant protection products (WP on PPP) was hosted by the Dutch NVWA (Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority) in the Hague.

The most relevant agenda points for ‘minor uses’ are listed below.

EPPO is developing a database on resistance cases. When more active substances are withdrawn, there will be fewer ‘modes of actions’ available, and this may lead to more minor uses cases. The Panel on Resistance now has to approve the content of the database. The database is accessible to experts so they can enter data.

Regarding extrapolation possibilities EPPO has developed 82 tables for herbicides, fungicides and insecticides and 17 tables for crop safety. These tables are considered very useful. However, it is quite difficult to find the information needed from these tables. Therefore, a searchable database to retrieve the extrapolation possibilities reported in the tables would be very useful.

Evaluators from industry, as well as from Competent Authorities, the MUCF and governmental bodies are the likely users of such a database. A small group of ‘experts on extrapolation’, representatives from EPPO, the MUCF and from the Commodity Expert Groups will all be involved in the process for the creation and maintenance of the database.

This project will be a joint project between EPPO and the MUCF. Within one year a pilot version of the database should be available to be presented to the WP PPP.

In early 2018, the EPPO Panel on Harmonization of Data on PPP has continued to develop new EPPO Codes and groupings e.g. for Ornamental crops and Weeds. The proposals from the Panel were presented and with some minor adaptations most new EPPO Codes and groupings were adopted by the WP PPP. These will soon be published on the EPPO website.

The WP PPP participants were able to walk to the Binnenhof in the evening after the meeting. It houses the meeting place of the Dutch Parliament.



*Binnenhof building (the Hague)*

## REFIT update

On 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018 the consultancy Ecorys organised a meeting to discuss the preliminary findings of the study they have carried out in the framework of the REFIT process for Regulation (EC) 1107/2009 and Regulation (EC) No 396/2005. The meeting was attended by around 50 people from Member States, NGO’s, other stakeholders, and the European Commission. The MUCF also participated in the meeting.

The MUCF was very pleased to read that “Competent Authorities and stakeholders welcome the establishment of the MUCF” and to see that most of the issues that were raised by the MUCF at previous occasions were taken on board in the draft report.

In the draft report it is stated that the availability of plant protection products for minor uses is negatively affected by a lack of clarity regarding the rules for authorisation and of harmonisation between Member States. In that sense it is good that the MUCF is already working on a Guidance Document on Minor Uses (for more details see the 5<sup>th</sup> Newsletter).

When procedures are not clearly established Member States seek alternative means to guarantee the availability of the necessary products on their national market. This may lead to an increasing number of emergency authorisations.

Many stakeholders and Member States have made the criticism that the definition of minor uses is not sufficiently clear. The MUCF also advocates a harmonized EU-wide definition (instead of national definitions) which would facilitate the zonal process and mutual recognition.

Regarding residues, the consultant concluded that provisions for improving the acceptance of data on residue trials generated outside the EU, when scientifically valid, and extrapolations would increase the number of possible solutions for minor uses needs.



This is in line with a statement of the MUCF that the use of residue data generated outside the EU will support minor uses extensions.

The MUCF is identified as one of the key stakeholders in the REFIT process and the overall impression is that the issue of ‘minor uses’ is well addressed in the draft report. We are looking forward to the final report that is expected by the end of June 2018.

## OECD meetings 2018

The meeting of the OECD Expert Group on Biopesticides (EGBP) was held on 19 June 2018 at the OECD Headquarters in Paris. The EGBP meeting followed a one-day seminar on “Test methods for micro-organisms”. A joint session with the Expert Group on Minor Uses (EGMU) was held on the following morning. In the afternoon the EGMU met.

The seminar on “Test methods for micro-organisms” was attended by more than 50 people. The topic was selected based on the results of an OECD survey (published in the OECD Series on Pesticides No 87; <http://www.oecd.org/chemicalsafety/pesticides-biocides/publications-on-biopesticides.htm>) conducted in 2012 to identify where existing test methods or guidance are not sufficient to generate data needed to assess microbial pesticides.

Micro-organisms used as pesticides are regulated in similar ways to chemical pesticides. However, the biological properties of living micro-organisms differ from the properties of chemical pesticides, and, hence, the test methods used may not be the same as for a chemical pesticide. Whereas chemical pesticides have been assessed for decades and many test methods been designed for them, the assessment of microbial pesticides is relatively new, and hence evaluators of microbial pesticides do not yet have the broad spectrum of assessment methods that are available to evaluators of chemical pesticides and not all test methods are appropriate for (living) micro-organisms.



Inside the OECD building of la Muette (Paris)

Topics discussed were related to (i) the applicability of existing test methods for micro-organisms, (ii) the interpretation of results performed in tests for micro-organisms (iii) ensure that information on the biology of the active organism strain/species is considered when designing tests, particularly test duration, (iv) consideration of novel mechanisms of biopesticide action that may require new or amended guidelines and test methods.

The outcome of the seminar is that a scoping document will be prepared to identify in more detail than in the survey report the key areas for further work on test methods and guidelines, and to take this work forward in small groups of experts. A report of the seminar will be prepared and published in the OECD-series on Pesticides.

In the meeting of the EGBP a variety of topics was discussed. The necessity of an earthworm test, as well as the requirement to submit data on sewage treatment were questioned. Statements to be used as justifications in registration dossiers to address these data points will be prepared. A working document on secondary metabolite production by micro-organisms is in the process of publication. The outline of issue papers for some groups of highly specific micro-organisms (bacteriophages and baculoviruses) was agreed.

Non-chemical methods are one way to solve minor use needs and therefore there is a strong link between biopesticides and minor uses. A joint meeting of the two expert groups (EGBP and EGMU) was organised to exchange ideas and work on collaborative projects. As a first step, case studies on existing registered biopesticides (on minor crops) will be developed through exchange of existing assessment reports and will identify differences and similarities, and what worked, what did not.

The EGMU decided to undertake two minor uses projects. Firstly a ‘Guidance document on efficacy and crop safety data’ will provide guidance on how to rely on efficacy and crop safety data generated in other countries and regions. A draft will be distributed to members for review by September. The MUCF will be one of the leads in this project. A second project will be to develop a ‘Guidance document on how to solve minor use needs’. To start with, a table of contents/sections for the guidance document will be developed. Again, the MUCF will be one of the leads together with the US IR-4 project and the Canadian Pest Management Centre. Input for this activity will be taken from the ‘Guidance Document on Minor Uses’ that the MUCF is preparing as this guidance document describes the process from the *minor use need* to the *solution* and provides an overview of registration issues.

## Horizon 2020

Horizon 2020 is the largest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly EUR80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020). It promises more breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts by taking great ideas from the laboratory to the market. Within the Horizon 2020 programme agriculture and food systems, forestry, the marine environment and the sustainable, low carbon and resource efficient bioeconomy are at the very heart of the challenges to be addressed.

In the most recent call there are projects that are of interest for minor uses and for the Coordination Facility. There is a need to develop and promote more cost-effective and sustainable Integrated Pest Management (IPM) options which are based on a holistic view of agro-ecosystems (SFS-06-2018-2020: Stepping up integrated pest management).

Proposals shall address only one of the following sub-topics: (A) Activities that bring together the various individual IPM models and decision support systems into a platform to make them available for a wider range of geographic conditions, and (B) Activities that contribute to give farmers throughout the EU broader access to the existing knowledge on integrated pest management and to help them to incorporate IPM solutions in existing agricultural systems.

Although the MUCF does not have means or the resources to apply for these projects, the envisaged outcomes may be of major importance for the MUCF. For that reason, the MUCF may want to become involved in these projects. One benefit of participation of the MUCF will be that the EU Minor Uses Database (EUMUDA) can serve as a knowledge database for IPM solutions.



More information on the Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2018-2020 can be found at: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2018-2020/main/h2020-wp1820-food\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2018-2020/main/h2020-wp1820-food_en.pdf)

In case you are interested to participate in one of the projects the Horizon 2020 programme related to 'minor uses' and if you want to work together with the MUCF, please contact us at [contact@minoruses.eu](mailto:contact@minoruses.eu).

## Interview Vivian Powell

Vivian Powell works on the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board, an important growers' association in the UK.



*Vivian Powell from AHDB*

*What is your background and how long have you worked in the field of 'minor uses'?*

I started in working in the area of minor use authorisations in 1993, when legislation in the UK changed, and it was recognised that a significant amount of residues data must be generated to support the authorisations in the UK which were then called Specific Off-Label Approvals (some MS called it the UK illegal use system!) I was involved with data generation, spraying and sampling the full range of horticultural crops, and preparing reports which were then submitted to the UK regulator now called the Chemicals Regulation Directorate, who evaluated the data and issued authorisations for use.

*How would you describe your experience with the MUCF?*

My experience of working with the MUCF is positive. I think a fully funded MUCF will be important moving forward, and could take on roles such as providing information about the loss of active substances, new active substances and biorational products, and evaluating where they may fit best into crop protection programmes for speciality crops. The EUMUDA database is a useful tool, but perhaps increased support for completing information might be helpful so that all Member States are represented.

*You attended the Third Global Minor Use Summit. Are you satisfied with the outcome? What do you think of collaboration at global level to solve minor uses issues?*

I believe global approaches for speciality crops is a very important development. I feel again that this is an area where the MUCF could coordinate data generation across the EU as part of the proposed projects from the Global Minor Use Summit (GMUS).

Obviously, this will require close consultation with the Commodity Expert Groups, manufacturers and biopesticide producers to ensure that products can be registered in the EU. Food production is a global concern, and having good quality, healthy food is critical. The example provided in GMUS conferences of data generation on blueberry and tomatoes and the subsequent MRL evaluation is very informative. Sharing of data, collaboration and a coordinated approach to EFSA and regulatory authorities are all areas which could be important for MUCF involvement along with supporting discussions about use of data from outside the EU.

*How do you see the future for minor uses? Do you have any messages for the MUCF?*

As stated speciality crops are an important part of the diet across EU and globally. I hope that the dynamic team in MUCF can forge strong links with EFSA and the European Commission to help provide guidance on the potential loss of actives and to provide a co-ordinated response on behalf of the Commodity Expert Groups. This activity, along with strengthening links and developing research/residues programmes with IR-4 personnel and other key representatives of the GMUS will be important for all concerned.

The UK has been strongly represented in attendance at Minor Use Group meetings since they were formed, we hope that this representation can continue following EU Exit.

## CEG– HEG autumn 2018 meetings

The autumn minor uses expert meetings will be held from 10-12 October 2018 in Vienna, Austria. The Horizontal Expert Group will meet, as well as some of the Commodity Expert Groups. We are now developing the agenda and by mid-July the registration for these meetings will be opened. Participants to previous meetings will receive an invitation letter. The details will also be announced on our website.



*View on Vienna*



Any question or comments on the newsletter? Contact Flora Limache at [contact@minoruses.eu](mailto:contact@minoruses.eu)